



Chapter 2: Patrols



Overview

Introduction

Shore units will get their boats underway to conduct a variety of patrols. The intent of this chapter is to discuss types of boat patrol and their respective procedures. Patrols may have different titles for the same type of task or one general title to cover many tasks. Examples include safety, familiarization, training, harbor, and regatta patrols. In all cases, the crew is underway at the direction of the operational commander. The patrol may be in response to a known problem or meant as a method of prevention or early detection.

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Coast Guard Boat Crew Seamanship Manual





Section A. Safety Patrols

Overview

Introduction

Safety patrols directly support the Coast Guard's maritime safety responsibilities. For the Auxiliary, the safety patrol supports the search and rescue (SAR) mission specifically to locate and help persons and boats in distress. While a routine safety patrol is being conducted, it is common practice to perform other missions, such as checking aids to navigation (ATON) or pollution levels. Auxiliary safety patrols work for a Coast Guard operational commander.

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Benefits of Safety Patrols

A.1. General

Safety patrols provide important benefits for the boat crew, Coast Guard, and the public. These benefits include:

- Practice for the crew and familiarization with their area of responsibility (AOR).
- Public seeing the Coast Guard in action.
- Public awareness that distress assistance is available.
- Increased opportunity for the boating public to obtain boating safety information, sea condition reports, or navigation hazard notices.
- Information for the federal, state, and local agencies responsible for updating navigation aids and charts.
- Detection of unreported events, including SAR and pollution.

NOTE &

Patrols scheduled before sundown, or on receipt of a severe storm warning are to help boaters to get to a secure harbor. This is considered



Auxiliary Safety Patrol Boat Duties

A.2. General

A boat on patrol should always be ready to answer distress or assistance calls expediently, even when ordered to stand by at a pier. To help boaters, many boat crews carry additional equipment, perhaps an extra battery and a good array of tools onboard. The district commander may require boats to carry equipment to meet the unique needs of the district.

A.3. Coxswain's responsibility

Coxswains should know and follow the local guidance and modifications to the primary directives for Coast Guard policy and procedures. This information comes from the Coast Guard group commander, Director of Auxiliary, or order-issuing authority in response to the local needs or changing conditions. Before getting underway, the coxswain should:

- Know the patrol area and review factors such as, tidal action, weather patterns, fishing areas, and navigational aids.
- Verify that fuel tanks are full and all equipment is checked and operating properly.
- Ensure that the required crew is aboard in the correct uniform and properly certified.
- Verify that at least one other crew member is qualified to command the boat in case the coxswain needs to seek relief.
- Ensure all crew members are physically capable of performing mission.
- Provide a thorough briefing on the boat, its equipment, and its operation. Specifically address possible hazards, risk awareness and situation awareness.
- Once satisfied, go to the assigned patrol sector and notify the operational commander of your arrival or departure, the number and names of persons on board, and verify that conditions are within the facility's operational standards.

A.4. Reporting responsibility

Proper reports keep boaters and the Coast Guard informed about boat patrols and local boating conditions. Whether it is a routine position report, a sea condition report, or a log entry, all reports should be accurate.



A.4.a. Operational status reports

While underway, maintain communications with the your unit if your operating within radio range. Report the your boat's location and operational status (operations and position reports) to the cognizant at regular intervals; normally, every 30 to 60 minutes.

A.4.b. Patrol logs

Keep a log of significant patrol activities. The narrative of each event should be a brief accurate description of situations, procedures, actions, and activities. The log will help back up reports sent to the Coast Guard and answer any inquiries.

A.4.c. Sea condition reports

NOTE &

Ensure that arrangements with the radio station to broadcast sea condition reports do not infer any endorsement, by the Coast Guard or Auxiliary, of any products or services. Report sea conditions to the public by arranging a broadcast program with a local radio station. The patrol boat's report will normally be taped so that it can be replayed several times during the day. This provides reports of wind and wave conditions in simple terms to the boating public. Remember that only actual conditions are described; weather forecasting is to be left to professional meteorologists.

A.5. Patrolling

Make a preliminary sweep of the area to establish familiarity with the prevailing conditions, potential trouble areas, and to announce to local boaters that your crew is on patrol. Keep your speed down while patrolling to enable the crew to keep a sharp lookout in all directions, and to conserve fuel.

A.6. Continuing patrol during heavy weather

The patrol boat should not be the first to leave an area when adverse conditions develop. While a coxswain should never jeopardize the boat crew, during heavy weather it is important that a patrol continue as long as possible. In case of a sudden storm, many pleasure boats will probably be in need of some type of assistance.



A.7. Assistance

NOTE &

Do not hesitate to call for additional help as necessary when providing assistance. While on patrol, boat crews will encounter many types of assistance situations. Always approach them with caution, considering the different policies and procedures concerning assistance, including:

- Coast Guard Addendum to the National SAR Manual,
- Maritime SAR Assistance Policy,
- general salvage policy,
- risk assessment processes,
- proper operations to help the boat, and
- other concerns, such as the need for additional boats to help.

A.8. Assisting other patrols

When a safety patrol boat in an adjoining area is assigned an assistance mission, boats in the surrounding areas should move to the line between the two sectors. This allows them to answer a call in either of the sectors. Precise direction should be obtained from the operational commander.

A.9. Permission to secure

When it is time to end the patrol, notify the appropriate Coast Guard unit and request permission to secure. A final sweep normally will be made through the patrol area before securing.

NOTE &

A patrol boat that is damaged or has a crew member injured while on official patrol must contact the Coast Guard operational commander as soon as possible, and follow the prescribed procedures for the situation.





Section B. Regatta Patrols and Marine Parades

Overview

Introduction

A regatta or marine parade is an organized water event of limited duration that is conducted according to a prearranged schedule. Regattas involve both participant and spectator boats in activities such as, racing, water skiing, demonstrations, and similar grouped or classed marine skills and equipment. The safety of the participant boats is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization, unless they ask for Coast Guard assistance. The safety of the spectator boats is a Coast Guard responsibility, but should be verified with the event sponsors. The sponsor of the marine event is responsible for applying for approval of the event. The application must be submitted to the proper Coast Guard or civil authority at least 30 days prior to the event. For new or major marine events the application should be submitted well in advance (90-120 days).

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Patrolling Regattas

B.1. General

Regattas usually take place over a closed course where patrol sectors are established alongside and at each end of the course. The primary functions of a regatta patrol are to control the spectator boats and transient craft for their protection, and to ensure safety hazards do not enter into the event area.

NOTE &

The primary responsibility to protect participants from the hazards of the event, including other participants, rests with the sponsoring organization.

B.2. Patrol commander selection

The district commander, Captain of the Port (COTP), or Coast Guard group commander will designate the Patrol Commander (PATCOM) for a regatta or marine event. The PATCOM is normally a Coast Guard commissioned officer, Warrant officer, or an appropriate Auxiliarist.

NOTE &

Written instructions will describe the authority of the Auxiliarist to act as PATCOM. These instructions include: Patrol requirements; Pre-brief to all participants - duties and responsibilities; Establish communication frequencies and networks; and Instructions for completing after patrol reports. The Auxiliary must coordinate and cooperate with any law enforcement agency that might be on scene.

B.3. Designating an auxiliary boat commander

When a regatta or marine event is under the control of a Coast Guard PATCOM and the Auxiliary is also assisting, an Auxiliary boat commander (AUXCOM) will be designated. AUXCOM will work closely with the PATCOM to coordinate the Auxiliary boats and personnel, act as liaison in the preparation, conduct, and secure the event. (AUXCOM is also that person's radio call sign during the event.)



B.4. Establishing sectors

The length, size and shape of the course depend upon the type of regatta. To maintain operational control, regattas event courses are usually divided into sectors. (See Figure 2-1.) All sectors should be as small as is reasonable to allow patrols to regulate traffic and keep obstructions or boats from the course. Small sectors may limit mobility. Large sectors are too difficult for patrol boats to cover it effectively, and spectator boats might get too close to the course before a patrol boat can issue a warning. Patrol boats should move only within their assigned sectors. The following steps should help the PATCOM to establish and assign sectors.

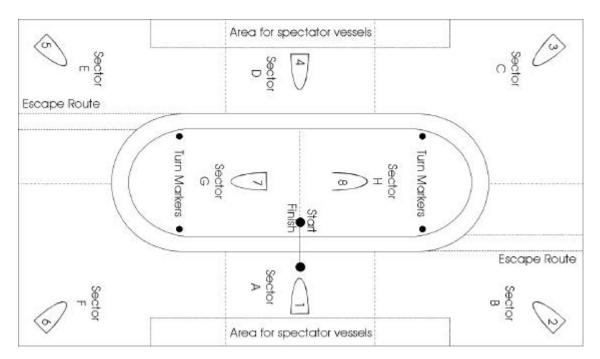
Step	Action
1	Divide large patrol areas into at least five sectors, one to three sectors along each outer side, and at least two at each end.
2	Operate all boats from the same charts.
3	Mark the charts with the patrol sectors.
4	Assign each patrol boat to a patrol sector.
5	Ensure that each boat reports its location and movements.
6	Establish more sectors as needed (e.g., change in course size or more spectator boats than expected).

B.5. The grid system

The grid system is an effective method of organizing patrol area operations. When using the grid system, transparent grid overlays are essential. All grids must be identical in size and identification (Figure 2-1). The benefits of using grids are:

- PATCOM and the patrol boat captains can read grid coordinates exactly.
- Coxswains can request assistance, by giving a location, using the grid on the chart.
- PATCOM can also assign additional patrol boats to the position.
- Location of a distress can be easily shown.





Typical Patrol Assignments and Sectors Figure 2-1



Patrol Boat Assignments

B.6. General

After completing all pre-race activities, the PATCOM dispatches the boats to their patrol positions. En route and within its sector, each patrol boat should examine the course for objects or debris that could affect participant, spectator, or patrol boat safety. This is especially important in events involving high-speed racing craft. Items such as a partially submerged soft drink container can cause a disaster if struck by a race boat at high speeds.

B.7. Using patrol boats marker and screen boats

Patrol boats on regatta patrol may be used two ways, either as marker boats or screen boats.

B.7.a. Marker boats

Position marker boats at designated places, either stationary or mobile, to mark limits of restricted areas. The event sponsor must provide marker boats to locate turning points for the regatta participants.

B.7.b. Screen boats

Use screen vessels as either moving or stationary screens. These boats maneuver in formation around the perimeter of the race course to be between the participants and the spectators. A stationary screen boat acts in the same manner as the marker boat.

NOTE &

Wakes could create hazards to boats in events. Patrol and spectator boats' speed must be kept to a minimum. In an emergency, patrol boats can increase their speed.

B.8. Boat ensign display

Boats on regatta patrol must display the proper identification signs, and all crew members must be in proper uniform. If an active duty Coast Guard PATCOM rides on an Auxiliary boat, remove the Auxiliary ensign temporarily, and display the Coast Guard ensign along with the special Coast Guard patrol signs.



B.9. Patrol boat

Each patrol boat has the responsibility to maintain a sharp lookout. Patrol observers should not become so engrossed in a racing event that they ignore the movement of the participants and the spectators within their sector.

B.10. Closing a section

Under certain conditions it is necessary for the Coast Guard to close a section of the course or the area in which the event is being held. It is a responsibility of the patrol boats to constantly be present in these areas. If there are not enough patrol boats, use floats or log booms. Warn spectators so they will not strike these objects.

B.11. Spectator boat anchoring

Ensure that all spectator boats anchor only in designated areas. All boats must anchor so that they do not swing into restricted zones. It is necessary to be alert for weather changes, a wind shift, or a current condition that might cause anchored boats to swing into the restricted zones.

B.12. Spectator boats

Spectator boat areas should be patrolled to ensure all boats are safely clear of the course or safety zone. Advise each spectator boat that is not in a proper position to move to a safe position. Be courteous. In case of failure to comply with a request, report all facts regarding the circumstances to the PATCOM for action.

NOTE &

The Auxiliary does not have any law enforcement authority. Use the words "please" and "thank you," and convey all message in a courteous tone of voice.

B.13. Casualty assistance

Patrol boats must advise the PATCOM of all problems in case the event needs to be stopped or the course closed temporarily. No patrol boat will leave its sector unless ordered to do so by the PATCOM. Take action only on direction from the PATCOM. This is to maintain order and efficiency of the operation. The following table summarizes possible emergency situations and the initial actions to take:



If	Then
you observe a casualty	advise the PATCOM of all details, who will direct the proper patrol boat to the scene. If a participant boat is the casualty, the event's sponsor may be the only boat to respond.
an accident occurs within your patrol boat's sector	assist immediately. If no arrangement has been made with the event sponsors, "stand by, observe" but defer all action to the (sponsor) committee boats designated for that purpose.
a boat is assigned to help outside its sector	it must report to the PATCOM upon completion of the assistance.
there is an emergency	rescue the people first before any attempt is made to salvage a boat. The protection of lives and personal safety are more important than the saving of property.

B.14. Securing a regatta patrol

Do not secure a regatta patrol operation until the course area is clear. The PATCOM will designate one patrol boat or more, if required, to make a final sweep of the area. Use the sweep to see that the course is in the condition it was in before the regatta. Any debris or markers that have not been picked up should be reported to the PATCOM. They will relay this information to the sponsoring organization that has the responsibility for policing the area.



Patrolling the Various Regattas

B.15. General

Knowing the sponsor rules, the boats involved and patrol responsibilities will ensure the safety or your crew, participant boats and spectators. This table introduces the responsibilities of the sponsor and patrol boats during powerboat, sailing, rowing, and the other various regattas.

Patrolling Regattas		
Sponsor Organization Responsibility	Any type of regatta is usually sponsored by an organization. Powerboats may have a corporate sponsor; sailboats, are sponsored by yachting clubs or associations; and rowing regattas are usually sanctioned by a prep school or collegiate organization. The sponsors have rules that the participants of a race must follow. At times, the sponsors provide especially trained crews to assist during emergencies.	
Patrol Boat Responsibility	Only assist a participant or spectator boat if agreed upon or requested by the sponsor and approved by the Patrol Commander. Know the sponsor's rules. Be aware of the construction, use, and particulars of the boats used in the regatta. During an emergency with either the participant or spectator boats, an abrupt action by an inexperienced boat crew may cause a participant's disqualification.	

NOTE &

PATCOM should keep close liaison with regatta sponsor officials before, during, and after the regatta event.

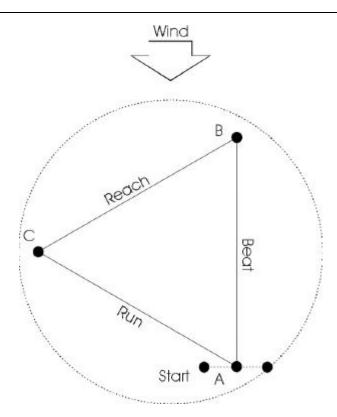


Regattas	Powerboat	Sailing	Rowing (crew racing)
Course Layout	Large rectangle or long oval course involving the escape valve idea, diagonally opposite at each end, enabling race boats to leave the course. (Figure 2-1).	Nearly all courses are triangular, allowing for use of the basic sailing positions. Course must be laid out to conform with the prevailing wind direction. (Figure 2-2).	The races are held on a straight course with marker craft on either side and a moving screen behind to prevent spectator boats from interfering.
Operation Sectors	Use boats as moving or stationary screens along sides of the course. Maintain a line, behind which spectator boats stay. The ends of the course require moving screens if it is longer than it is wide, to keep spectators from entering the course.	Course type and maneuvering calls for, a combination of marker, stationary boats, and moving screen boats to stop passing boats from entering the course. Moving screen patrol move with the regatta. (Figure 2-3).	Use stationary positions and do not leave these positions unless assistance is required. (Figure 2-4).
Participant Boat Particulars	Fragile construction. Sensitive to wakes.	Possibility of capsizing. Identifying capsized boats difficult because of lack of noise and sailboats closely grouped.	The craft are very light, have a very low freeboard and require quiet water.
Handling Participant Boat Emergencies Emergencies Emergencies on the course should be left to the sponsor rescue craft, unless asked.		Ask the skipper if assistance is wanted, then allow him to direct the operation.	Check with event sponsors, assume it is okay to assist participants, they usually do not wear life preservers.



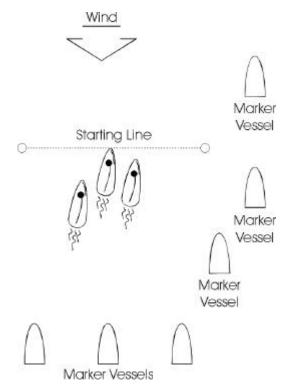
Regattas	Powerboat	Sailing	Rowing (crew racing)
Spectator Boats	Sponsors and patrols share responsibility for the safety of spectator boats. Keep spectator boat wakes small.	Sponsors and patrols share responsibility for the safety of spectator boats. Tactfully attempt to keep spectator boats from entering the course or going between the sailboats. This happens when a spectator or transient boat is unaware of an ongoing race, or they presume they may proceed following navigation rules.	Sponsors and patrols share responsibility for the safety of spectator boats. Ensure that all spectator boats are in place well before the start of the race so that wake-driven wave action will subside. Prevent spectator boats from entering the course.
Other Responsibilities	Move about looking out for debris that may endanger participant or spectator boats.	Be alert to course legs being moved or rotated, and advise patrol boats.	Keep wakes down.
In Addition	Special communication problems may arise when operating near loud engines, and may require traffic control signs, headphones, etc.	Racing sailboats take advantage of wind conditions and are tacking back and forth along the course. Try not to place patrol boats in the infield, they could be in the way. Instead, set patrol boats downwind and astern of the participating boats. Discuss, assisting, sailboat righting, and towing at the pre-race briefing.	Patrol boats should minimize the use of hailing equipment whenever the rowers are nearby to eliminate interference with their cadence. Other types of rowing regattas feature dories, lifeboats, whaleboats, canoes, and even bathtubs. Patrol these regattas in the same manner as crew races.



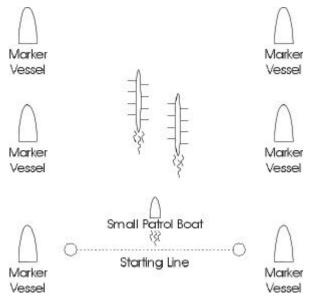


Typical Sailboat Regatta Course Figure 2-2





Typical Sailboat Regatta Patrol Figure 2-3



Typical Rowing Regatta Patrol Figure 2-4



Marine Parades

B.16. General

The term "marine parade" denotes a boat or a group of boats participating in a parade. Depending upon the nature of the event, a patrol boat will maintain the grouping or allow it to vary. The event is usually moving, and does not ordinarily retrace its path, although the parade may end at its starting point.

A patrol commander (PATCOM) will normally be assigned. PATCOM and patrol boat duties typically include:

- Selecting a vantage point for the PATCOM with maximum visibility of the event; usually a moving facility.
- Maintaining communications between the PATCOM and the marine parade marshal or committee.
- Maintaining parade configuration per established routes and times.
- Assigning patrol boats to:
 - Stationary sectors along the parade course containing spectator boats that are to remain within a prescribed limit.
 - Move sectors of patrol boats ahead, behind, and alongside the participating boats.
 - Sectors between the welcomed boat and the moving welcoming fleet, for such events.
 - Prevent transient boats for disrupting the parade.
 - Render assistance to life threatening situations and endangered property.





Section C. Aids to Navigation Patrols

C.1. General

Coast Guard Regulations state that coxswains shall make every effort to observe and report any aid to navigation (ATON) that is out of order or off station. (The boat crew assists by keeping a sharp eye out for discrepancies.) This is usually done underway while on routine operations. However, Coast Guard resources may be directed to get underway specifically to check for ATON discrepancies. In addition to patrolling, local boat resources may be used to assist the ATON units that maintain and service these aids.

C.2. Reporting ATON discrepancies

Report any aids that are damaged, off station, or otherwise not serving their intended purpose (i.e., not watching properly) to the Coast Guard unit that you are patrolling for. Clearly identify the aid, its location, and the discrepancy. The chart, Light List, or Local Notice to Mariners should be used to verify the correct ATON information.

The Auxiliary has established procedures for their reporting of ATON discrepancies. The following criteria is used to select the method of reporting a discrepancy:



Criticality	Report by	Criteria	
Critical	Radio	Failure to report by the most expeditious means may result in loss of life and/or damage to a boat.	
		 Examples: Aid iced and light is obscured. Light signal failure. Light signal showing improper characteristic. Sinking or submerged buoy. Aid off station/adrift/missing. Radiobeacon off the air (improper characteristic). 	
Urgent	Telephone	Failure to report will result in no danger of loss of life or boat damage. However, the discrepancy may contribute to the stranding of a boat.	
		Examples:Missing daymarks.Sound signal failure.Radiobeacon timing sequence incorrect.	
Routine	U. S. Mail	Failure to report will result in a very low likelihood of a grounding or stranding, but corrective maintenance is necessary.	
		 Examples: Signal obscured (by foliage or other objects). Faded daymark. Leaning structure. Bird's nest. Improper day markings. Retroreflective material missing or inadequate. Numbers missing. 	



Section D. Chart Updating Patrols

D.1. Agreement with NOAA

The Auxiliary has a formal agreement with the National Ocean Service (NOAA-NOS), an agency under the Department of Commerce. The agreement provides for liaison and cooperation to provide accurate and up-to-date chart information to the boating public.

The agreement between NOAA-NOS and the Auxiliary authorizes and encourages the scheduling of safety patrols to verify the accuracy of published navigation charts. These patrols, called Chart Updating Patrols, are not restricted solely to areas covered by NOAA-NOS charts. Other federal and state agencies also publish charts or maps used by the boater. Chart updating patrols on local, state, and federal waters covered by these charts are also authorized.

D.2. Discrepancies

Any discrepancies found should be reported on the appropriate chart updating form.

Members of the Auxiliary need not be performing on a scheduled patrol to notice and report discrepancies. Alert coxswains should always compare chart information with the actual conditions and report differences. Chart updating patrols should always be alert to the actions and activities of other boaters and be ready to render assistance.





Section E. Disaster Patrols

E.1. General

District or unit Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) typically provide for patrolling in the event of a natural or manmade disaster. This type of patrol, sometimes called a Disaster Patrol, deals with emergencies either imminent, in progress, or the result of events such as hurricanes, storms, waterfront explosions, fires, or floods.

E.2. Role of boat crew

Boat crew may be used to transmit warnings to waterfront and isolated areas. They can also transport supplies and personnel, evacuate stricken areas, and coordinate boat traffic. This includes acting as guides to safe moorings, to secure small craft, or any other tasks necessary to speed preparations for, or relief from, emergency conditions.

E.3. Role of Coast Guard

The Coast Guard is typically part of any local emergency management plan. In this role, Coast Guard boats may be called upon to assist in evacuations of the civilian population. As seen in many disasters, there often are people who do not want to evacuate ahead of time. The Coast Guard has federal law enforcement powers (the Auxiliary does not), but the local officials are the proper people to handle these civil situations and to provide guidance. However, politely explaining the situation may convince a reluctant person to take the right action.





Section F. Port Security and Maritime Pollution

F.1. General

Port security and maritime pollution issues both fall under the Coast Guard Directorate of Marine Safety and Maritime Environmental Protection. Typically, the Captain of the Port (COTP) is the field unit responsible to implement these programs. The COTP may have the resources or may have to call upon local Coast Guard facilities to provide boats. Port security is concerned about waterside security measures, typically within a security zone. Maritime pollution patrols focus on detecting, reporting, and monitoring of oil spills and hazardous material discharges into U.S. navigable waters.

F.2. Security zone patrol

There is no federal, state, or local military service or civilian agency with the waterside resources, expertise, and lawful maritime authority comparable to that of the Coast Guard. The COTP has developed tactics and countermeasures to deal with waterborne threats. Assets likely to be at risk include:

- ship
- pier or port complex
- waterfront facility
- people

F.2.a. Operations

NOTE &

No security operation is routine. Keep alert and aware of your surroundings at all times. The COTP will provide specialized equipment and training, if needed. A command center should be established with direct control by the COTP over all Coast Guard deployed resources. Most security zone enforcement requires simple patrolling or "policing" of the zone boundaries. This is usually done by one or two boats patrolling the perimeter. The security zone may be established around a fixed site such as a pier, or it may be a moving security zone for a vessel underway. The moving security zone usually requires at least two boats.



F.3. Pollution patrol

There are usually two types of pollution patrol: a patrol to detect or prevent spills, and a patrol in response to a spill. The boat may be given specific areas to visually inspect or given general direction to cruise along the waterfront and shoreline to look for any discharges.

F.3.a. Detection or prevention

The local operational commander will have a boat patrol to detect any unreported spills or discharges. Early detection this way may keep the incident from growing into a major spill. Also, the source of the spill may be identified - this may stop someone from intentionally discharging pollution AND also identify the person or company who will pay the costs for cleanup.

F.3.b. Response to a spill

Response to a pollution incident will often involve boats in some type of patrol duty, such as monitoring the situation. The person coordinating the response to the incident, the On-Scene Commander (OSC), will have an incident command structure to provide tasking and guidance for boat operations.